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ABSTRACT

The recent innovation of adapting the debate to the judge's preferred philosophy appears to have been supplanted by a converse trend: advocates now attempt to force the judge to adopt the paradigm dictated by the strategies of the debate round. The existence of such a widespread dispute over the appropriate decision making system in debate requires the development of criteria for discriminating between paradigms. Any decision system or set of decision rules can be evaluated on the basis of six criteria: (1) fitness (for the academic debate context), (2) fairness (to each team), (3) clarity and consistency, (4) facilitation of the decision making process, (5) encouragement of quality argumentation, and (6) application of criteria from original context (if any). These criteria serve as a set of "topoi" for the advocate faced with the burden of defending a particular decision rule in the course of a debate. The criteria also allow a variety of particular decision rules. In selecting a policy, the judge may follow guidelines in four areas: presumption, costs and benefits evaluation, probablistic treatment, and counterplans. Decision rules permit sorting of competing claims in these areas, and the eventual rendering of a decision. (HOD)

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"ARGUMENT ABOUT ARGUMENT"

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"Argument About Argument"

Recent analyses of National Debate Tournament judges' reactions reveal an interesting trend concerning judging paradigms, or decision systems. In 1974 most judges identified themselves as adherents to the stock issues perspective.[1] By 1977, the policy making metaphor dominated judging philosophies,[2] and by 1981, hypothesis testing had become a significant factor.[3] This proliferation of decision systems was accompanied by increased attention to the issue of paradigm selection. Many observers commented on the sharp rise in disputes over the appropriate decision system in debate.[4] Most coaches believe that the appropriate paradigm for deciding a debate is itself a debateable issue.[5]

The recent innovation of publishing judging philosophies in the National Debate Tournament Booklet of Judges and dissemination of judging philosophies at District Qualifying Tournaments can be traced to the desire to encourage debater adaptation to diverse judging philosophies. Ostensibly the provision of such statements provides the debater with useful information about the audience. However, this goal of adapting to the judge's preferred philosophy appears to have been supplanted by a converse trend: advocates now attempt to force the judge to adopt the paradigm dictated by the strategic exigencies of the debate round. The increased popularity of the Tabula Rasa approach to judging seems to be reinforcing the latter trend.[6]

Existence of such widespread dispute over the appropriate decision making system in debate necessitates the development of criteria for selecting between competing paradigms. Two advantages inhere in this approach. First, the application of a consistent set of evaluative criteria for decision system selection would ease the task of the advocate. A finite set of considerations would be in order when developing arguments on the issue of paradigm selection. Second,

such a set of standards would simplify the judge's task. Existence of a set of evaluative criteria with which to measure the utility of decision making systems would reduce the subjectivity of paradigm selection.

The absence of such a set of evaluative criteria for decision system selection is a sub-optimal state of affairs. Reliance on criteria which emerge in the debate round permits embarassing mis-matches. If only one team in the debate is familiar with the arguments inherent in paradigm selection, they possess a tremendous advantage. When one team (effectively) selects the model for decision rendering, they are likely to systematically advance the particular model most advantageous to them in that particular round. Furthermore, the judge may not be clear about which arguments are most critical in the paradigm selection dispute in the absence of a set of evaluative criteria. Stipulated, well-disseminated criteria for selecting the decision making system would thus serve the entire debate community by facilitating balanced and thorough analysis of this important issue.[7]

Before presenting a set of evaluative criteria for decision system selection, the use of such decision making models in academic debate is discussed. Then, the criteria for evaluating competing decision making systems are presented. An example of the use of such criteria by advocates is discussed. Next, an example of a rules-based algorithm for decision making in debate--the decision rules system--is outlined.

Decision Models in Academic Debate

Academic debate has a long tradition of borrowing. We have borrowed our format from other real world decision making bodies (e.g., policy deliberation from the legislature; two teams of advocates, cross-examination from the judicial

system); we have borrowed a decision making system from science (hypothesis testing); and a judging stance from philosophy (tabula rasa). Unfortunately, some notions which we have borrowed are not very clear in the originating, or "lending" disciplines, which contributes to a conceptual cloudiness in our own discipline. One specific concept which was borrowed from philosophy of science is "paradigm," a notion which we frequently employ to characterize our decision making systems. Thomas Kuhn, a philosopher of science, is generally credited with originating the notion of "paradigm," as it is understood in philosophy of science.[8] However, he did not adequately clarify this notion when he originally introduced it. As Masterman observed:

> On my counting he uses paradigm in not less than 21 different senses. . . Thus he describes a paradigm as a universally recognised scientific achievement; . . as a myth; . . as a philosophy; . . as a textbook; . . as a model; . . an analogy; . . as an accepted device in common law; . . as a device; . . as an anomalous pack of cards; . . as a machine tool factory; . . as a gestalt figure which can be seen in two ways; . . as a standard applied to metaphysics; . . as a new way of seeing.[9]

The practice of debate usually advances much more rapidly than its theoretical framework. This ad hoc approach to theory may have been responsible for the wholehearted acceptance of the practice of using metaphors as the primary organising principle for decision making systems in academic debate. Unfortunately, given the ad hoc nature of theory development in debate, we frequently fail to adequately clarify our notions of theory. This difficulty is of course compounded when the concepts we borrow--like "paradigm"--lack clarity in their original contexts.

One difficulty which arises from the use of models and metaphors transplanted into the academic debate context is the lack of uniformity in conceptualization

of these decision making systems. For example, in one recent elimination round, an affirmative team, after accepting the hypothesis testing model as the decision making metaphor for the round, proceeded to insist that the negative team was obligated to present and defend a specific policy. This understanding of the burdens of the hypothesis testing model is inconsistent with views expressed by other adherents to this model. The negative team asserted that topical counterplans were acceptable for policy makers. Again, some individuals who identify themselves as policy makers hold that counterplans must be nontopical. Thus, it appears that advocates and critic-judges alike blithely assume that their individual conceptualization of a particular decision making system is consistent with the conceptualizations of others.

Furthermore, the metaphors and models applied to academic debate often are not originally designed with the unique conventions and constraints of academic debate in mind. The presence of but two sides in each debate is unlike many real world settings from which our metaphors are drawn. Often more than two perspectives and more than two sets of advocates are present in a controversy. Legislators can amend legislation during the decision making process--even during the last speech! Many competing viewpoints are presented by several commentators in science. Judges typically do not place time limitations upon the testimony of witnesses in trials. With the possible exception of submission deadlines, scientists are usually characterized as proceeding through careful and deliberate advance of their research, unhampered by the constraints associated with a debate tournament.

While these points of contrast do not necessarily rule out the use of models drawn from other contexts in academic debate, they do strongly suggest caution in the application of these metaphors to the unique context of academic debate. The existence of a set of criteria for evaluating decision systems would encourage

careful scrutiny of the differences between contexts, and would facilitate the adoption of clarifications designed to eliminate problems caused by these differences. It would also help to eliminate difficulties caused by conceptual vagueness. Thus, besides providing assistance in the selection of a decision system in the debate round, a set of evaluative criteria for decision system selection would also contribute to improving our decision systems.

Criteria for Evaluating Decision Systems

We offer six criteria for use in selecting a decision making system. First, it must be appropriate for the unique academic debate context. We label this criteria "fitness." It necessitates an examination of the essential nature of academic debate. Initially, this is a competitive activity. A winning team is selected from the two teams competing in the round. Debate permits no ties in the decision, and the judge may not abstain or defer the decision. This serves, among other things, as a check on undesireable practices (e.g., falsification of evidence), for debate teams monitor each other in the hopes of obtaining the win. Second, competing policies are evaluated. While it is possible that a national debate proposition phrased as a value question might be adopted, their relatively infrequent appearance on the ballot and vote-getting performance suggest that this is improbable. Third, only two teams are represented in the controversy. Since it is competitive and adversarial, advocates rarely seek accomodating middle ground. Rather, they seek agreement with their predicted outcomes associated with the affirmative policy (and possibly with outcomes predicted of negative policy). Finally, time constraints are a practical limitation upon the deliberation process. As other commentators have observed, a 72 minute period does not permit exhaustive analysis of complex policy propositions.[10] The criterion of fitness requires that any decision system applied in academic debate should accomodate these unique features of this activity.

The second rule we posit for evaluating decision systems is that a decision system should be fair to each team. The criterion of neutrality mandates that a model must not give an advantage to one side or the other. A decision rule which systematically favors one side of the proposition regardless of skill and content of argument would be undesireability. The "flip effect," which gives a decisive advantage to the team who wins the coin toss in elimination rounds should be discouraged. No argumentative or educational reason would support such a decision system.

Third, decision rules should be clear and consistent. The application of rules to particular debates should be unambiguous so that debaters can predict the significance of their argumentative choices. Clarity and consistency also facilitate the task of the critic-judge in rendering a decision through the application of the decision rules to the argumentation in the round. This also renders the judge's decision more predictable, encouraging successful audience adaptation by debaters.

A fourth criterion requires that decision rules ought to expedite the tasks of the participants. If the decision rules somehow make the decision more difficult, less rational, or otherwise hinder the decision making system, they subvert the goals of the process. Put simply, rules in a decision making system ought to aide the judge and the advocates in their decision making task. Judicial interpretation should be minimized so that debaters know before the round precisely what is required to obtain the decision. It also encourages the debaters to self-monitor their argumentation since the standards of evaluation are known.

Fifth, a decision system ought to encourage good arguments. The decision rules ought to highlight important questions in the controversy, focusing attention of the debaters and the critic-judge on the critical points of clash. They ought not reward debaters who engage in faulty argumentation, nor should they

punish debaters for using sound argumentation. Decision rules which encourage or permit violations of these assumptions are indefensible on argumentative as well as educational grounds.

Finally, if the decision system has been drawn from another context and then applied to academic debate--instead of being developed specifically for debate--then the decision system is subject to the standards, limitations, and criticisms arising in its original context. For example, the hypothesis testing metaphor should be susceptible to the limitations of the scientific method, and subject to criticisms leveled at it in the scientific community.

Thus, any decision system or set of decision rules can be evaluated on the basis of these six criteria: fitness, neutrality, clarity and consistency, facilitation of decision making, encouragement of good argumentation, and application of criteria from original context. As a whole, these criteria for evaluating decision making systems serve as an aid to the advocate and the critic-judge. An application of these criteria to a specific decision problem illustrates their use by an advocate.

The Use of Decision System Evaluation Criteria by Advocates

The criteria outlined above serve as a set of topoi for the advocate faced with the burden of defending a particular decision rule or decision system in the course of a debate. This can be illustrated by discussing two competing decision rules for handling contradictions. On occasion negative teams present inherency arguments which have the (unintended) effect of reducing the relative significance of their disadvantages. That is, expansion of the present system to a limited degree may trigger (to some extent) the disadvantages which are applied to the affirmative plan by the second negative.

To illustrate, during the 1981-82 season an affirmative team arguing in

favor of the curtailment of the powers of labor unions suggested that employees with grievances should be allowed to take their employers to court without having to first exhaust all of the available union remedies. A negative team might wish to defend the Circuit Court trend of selective exclusions while arguing a disadvantage to court involvement (e.g., court delay). Of course, selective review would produce some court delay, opening the negative team to the charge of "contradiction."

The judge faced with this state of affairs must decide how to resolve the contradiction before a decision can be rendered. One approach to this situation argues that when evidence is presented to support positions which are inconsistent, this should result in the cancellation of both positions.[11] That is, both arguments are ignored in rendering a decision. A second decision rule attempts to reconcile this situation by crediting the contradictory team with the position which is most damaging to them without crediting them with additive impact.[12]

In the situation described above it is in the negative team's interest for the judge to adopt the latter, non-additive rule, while the affirmative should prefer the former, cancellation standard. The six criteria developed earlier supply a conceptual framework for evaluating the relative merits of these two competing decision rules. Both affirmative and negative debaters can attempt to frame arguments in favor of the rule which favors them based on these criteria.

The affirmative could argue that the cancellation rule is superior because it 1) allows only two sides. One implication of the negative position is that it logically yields two inconsistent policies instead of the affirmative policy: a) expanding court jurisdiction through selective review, and b) taking no action in order to avoid detrimental court delay. 2) The cancellation rule is more neutral and should therefore be accepted. The negative gains a systematic

advantage by arguing inconsistent positions, while the affirmative is forced to defend a single, consistent position. 3) the cancellation standard encourages good argumentation in that the negative team is penalized when they fail to coordinate their attack into a coherent whole. It cannot be desireable to both act and not act, although the implications of the negative attack is to do both.

The negative in this situation could advocate the non-additive decision rule. One approach would be to assert that this standard promotes good argumentation by forcing the affirmative to clash with the substantive arguments presented by the negative.

Thus, these guidelines provide the disputants with an arsenal of topoi for the analysis and evaluation of decision systems and particular decision rules. Furthermore, such guidelines also allow the judge to select a set of decisions rules consistent with the formal procedures and educational goals of this activity.

The Decision Rules Decision Making System

The rules orientation is an attempt to develop an algorithm for rendering a decision in academic debate. The criteria for evaluating decision systems developed earlier provided a conceptual framework for this development. The criteria allow a variety of particular decision rules. An illustrative application of these decision rules to the judging task is provided in this section of this essay.

The judicial role in policy dispute may be divided into four major domains: jurisdictional determination (i.e., does the affirmative policy embody the resolution? does the judge have jurisdiction to evaluate the proposal?), policy choice (i.e., should the proposal be adopted?), argumentation evaluation (i.e., should particular arguments be excluded from consideration because of poor quality

or because their retention would encourage poor argumentation?), and ethics (i.e., do ethical standards dictate a particular decision?).

Determination of Jurisdiction

The first stem in the process of evaluating a debate is determining jurisdiction. Each year the proposition serves to delimit the area for debate. One prior issue for each judge is the "topicality" of the plan, assessed by asking the question, "Does the plan meet the requirements of the proposition?" This central issue has received surprisingly little attention in the literature generated on debate theory.[13] These rules provide one method for evaluating the obligations encumbant upon the affirmative in this area:

1. The plan must include an example of the resolution.
2. Topical portions of the plan must be necessary in order to accrue the alleged benefits.
3. The plan must be sufficient in order to accrue the alleged benefits.
4. If challenged, the affirmative must demonstrate that its plan satisfies these requirements.

The first statement establishes the expectation that the plan will meet the requirements outlined by the debate proposition. The topic usually includes a number of such requirements. Textbooks typically recognize at least three central elements included in most contemporary policy propositions: an agent of change, a direction of change, and the nature of change. The agent is the institution or agency required to take action in the proposition. The nature of change identifies the domain or configuration of action expected. The direction of change specifies the sort of change required (e.g., increase or decrease, curtail or enhance, regulate or deregulate).

The second rule demands that the topical portions of the plan be necessary,

or essential if the alleged benefits are to be obtained. If topical action is required in order to gain the advantage, then the resolution is justified (absent disadvantages, etc.). If topical action is simply not needed to obtain the desired benefits, this rule is not satisfied and the affirmative should lose the debate.

A third decision rule holds that the plan, as a whole, must be sufficient to accrue the benefits. This policy standard is not related to topicality as much as to extra-topicality. The consequence of this rule is that extra-topical plan planks are permitted in the plan (so long as the second decision rule is satisfied). Founded on the realization that policy arguments are evaluated in contemporary academic debate, this rule encourages affirmative team to anticipate the likely consequences of adoption of their proposal. It is reasonable, for certain extra-topical planks are frequently essential for rational policy proposals to be workable. Legislation providing for a freeway ("Resolution" being that the federal government should build a freeway) would have to compensate landowners forced to move inorder to provide a right-of-way for that freeway. It would be the height of folly to reject a statute authorizing a desireable freeway simply because it includes provisions providing such compensation. Additionally, this decision rule requires affirmative teams to examine the legislative process. Sufficient resources for the desired actions. This sort of foresight deserves to be encouraged.

A decision rule which prohibits extra-topical planks entirely would exclude necessary enabling provisions of the legislation. The exclusion standard requires the analysis of policy in a vacuum. The affirmative is given license to designate only provisions specified in the resolution, which (in some metaphors) to abandon disadvantageous provisions of the plan without penalty. Such a decision rule encourages the inclusion of "red-herring" planks which draw fire from the negative,

only to be abandoned in later speeches.

The fourth decision rule assigns the furden of proof to the affirmative. If challenged, the affirmative must demonstrate the plan's topicality. This rule requires the affirmative to proffer a defense (on demand) for their implicit claim that the affirmative plan meets the jurisdicitonal requirements of the proposition. Such burdens usually include identifying an agent, action, and direction (and degree) of change. It seems reasonable to expect the affirmative advocate to be able to demonstrate that their proposal falls within the ambit of the resolution. Only if this burden is imposed can any guarantee be made that the ground for debate will be fairly divided. In addition, good arguments are encouraged, since this burden forces the affirmative to provide some grist for the mill. If the affirmative is allowed to select obscure and unrelated grounds for the debate, it is unfair to expect the negative to shoulder the burden of initiating the argument and accepting the burden of proof of non-topicality.

Choosing Policy

In selecting a policy, the judge may follow guidelines in four areas: presumption, costs and benefits evaluation, probabilistic treatment, and counterplans. The following decision rules permit sorting of competing claims in these areas, and the eventual rendering of a decision. These rules facilitate policy selection:

1. Presumption rests with the negative and is a function of the risk of change.
2. Risk is directly related to the extent of change a policy undertakes, to the importance of the affected area, and to the difficulty of reversing the change; it is inversely related to the quantity and quality of the information on which it is based.

3. The benefits of the affirmative policy must outweigh its costs, compared to the present system or alternative negative policy.

4. Costs and benefits are estimated by the product of the probability of the outcome and the utility of the event.

5. The speaker is responsible for the positions s/he advances.

6. Counterplans must be non-topical and competitive.

7. The policy with the least risk has presumption in a counterplan debate. If risk levels seem equivalent, the team with psychological presumption should be assigned logical presumption.

8. Plans must be presented in constructives; counterplans must be presented in first negative constructive.

The negative team automatically has presumption unless they present a counterplan. This assigns the initial burden of proof to the affirmative. If the affirmative omits to provide support for an obligation (e.g., that the affirmative policy will accrue benefits), the negative can win the debate by drawing attention to this flaw and its importance. Presumption also mandates a negative ballot in the event of a tie (e.g., costs and benefits appear equivalent). Neither of these circumstances occur very frequently.

Presumption also recognizes that since we cannot determine with certainty all outcomes of a proposed policy, some risk of undesireable unanticipated consequences adheres in every policy decision. The amount of risk varies according to certain identifiable factors, as Lichtman and Rohrer elaborate.[15] First, the greater the extent of the proposed change, the greater the risk. This is a function of both the number of changes and the extent of individual changes. As the number of changes increases, the number of opportunities for undesireable consequences increases. The greater the extent of an individual change, the more uncertainty is introduced into the prediction of effects. The factors are, of

course, additive. Second, risk is directly related to the importance of the proposed changes. More caution, for example, would be warranted for changes in the defense structure than in public works projects. The potential harms of any unanticipated costs are likely to be greater in the former domain. Third, as difficulty in reversing the policy change(s) rises, so does risk. If anantiipated disadvantages do in fact occur after policy implementation, the policy agent can always attempt to revert back to the state of affairs existing prior to implementation. However, because of expenditures in resources or changes in structure or environment, it may be difficult to reverse the change. The risk associated with a policy is therefore directly related to the difficulty of reversing it once adopted. Finally, risk is inversely related to the quality and quantity of the data used to make the decision. The more and better the data, the less uncertainty in the outcomes predicted, and the less risk of unanticipated costs.

The third rule requires that the affirmative prove that the benefits of the policy advocated outweigh the costs of the plan. This is compared to the present system or an alternative policy (counterplan) if the negative decides to present one. All decision making models feature this rule. It is obvious that one ought not opt for a policy which has greater costs than gains. This standard seems to be grounded in utilitarian philosophy. Guidance for the application of this policy may be found in the work of theorists in a variety of disciplines.[15]

Fourth, the costs and benefits should be estimated from the products of the probabilities and utilities of the events. The alternative, a completely dichotomous treatment of arguments (e.g., either the polar ice caps <u>will</u> melt of they will <u>not</u> melt), distorts the decision making process. It fails to meet two of the criteria discussed above. If, as in Zarefsky's words, "each advocate will have his own threshhold" for accepting such arguments or rejecting them,[16] a problem for the advocate arises whenever the judge's threshhold is unknown. Not

only must the advocate prove the consequences of the policy underconsideration, but also the advocate must argue for a threshhold that his/her arguments satisfy. The probabilistic treatment provides a simple solution: estimate the quality of the supporting evidence and arguments and include this in the estimate of the probability of the event. This relieves the advocate and critic of the responsibility of applying a threshhold to the arguments.[17]

The fifth decision rule in this area mandates that speakers are responsible for the positions they advocate. This is likely to increase the quality of arguments by forcing advocates to suffer the consequences of all arguments they advance. Advocates should not be permitted or encouraged to present arguments which they can dismiss if they prove to possess troublesome implications. An advocate who attempts to wriggle out of a difficult situation with the sophisticated strategy, "I didn't mean it!" should be penalized. This strongly suggests either a significantly misanalyzed position or the futile hope that one's opponents would fail to turn the argument against them. This rule is also supported by the fairness criterion--it is unfair to let an advocate dismiss the undesireable consequences of a position given the limited amount of time for opponents to develop other attacks agsinst the modified stance.

Counterplans should be non-topical and competitive. Here again the work of Lichtman and Rhorer is useful, although it is not necessarily the final word on the subject.[18] The criterion of fairness requires that a counterplan be non-topical, for it is not fair to limit the affirmative's options in policy without similarly limiting the negative's options. Other reasons could probably be adduced as well. Counterplans must give a reason to reject the affirmative policy. Hence they must either be mutually exclusive and superior or the counterplan alone must be superior to both or to the affirmative plan alone. If competing policies appear to have equivalent levels of risk, no logical reason exists for distinguishing the two. We therefore decided to allow psychological presumption to control in

probably rare situation.

The policies advocated in the debate must be presented in a speech prior to one's opponent's last constructive. Given the convention (and our decision rule presented in the next grouping) disallowing new constructive arguments in rebuttals, the criterion of neutrality demands that the affirmative plan be presented before the second negative constructive to allow negative plan arguments, and that any negative counterplan be presented before second affirmative constructive to allow affirmative counterplan arguments. It would be unfair to presnet a policy after it is too late for opponents to develop objections to it. This also serves quality argumentation by forcing teams to specify the policy they defend early.

Argumentation Evaluation

Several decision rules are developed in this section which relate most closely to quality of argumentation.

1. Contradictory positions are disallowed.
2. Rebuttals argument must rejoin antecedent arguments.
3. Rejoinder must be presented at the first opportunity in rebuttals.
4. Critics should evaluate the quality of the arguments presented.

In the area of argumentation evaluation, four decision rules are applicable. First, contradictory positions are disallowed. This is consistent with the criterion which holds that decision rules should facilitate quality argumentation. Contradictory positions are indicative of incomplete analysis. The advocate who advances contradictory positions is unable to determine which position is supported by the strongest arguments and hence unwilling to choose between them. Contradictory positions may also violate the criterion which requires that decision rules should facilitate the decision making process. Since contradictory positions cannot simultaneously be true, this undermines the critic's confidence in the policy being

advocated. This rule is similar to the "cancellation" standard discussed earlier.

A second norm encourages quality argumentation. Rebuttal arguments must rejoin antecedent arguments. This rule, of course, prohibits the development of new constructive arguments in rebuttals. This rule forces the affirmative and the negative to clash with their opponent's arguments. It is particularly relevant to the "turn around" argument. The growth of the turn around has been accompanied by the presentation of new advantages in the first affirmative rebuttal. These new ideas are cloaked in the "turn around" label in order to mask their status as new constructive arguments. An illustration from the 1980-81 proposition may clarify, where some affirmative teams increased U.S. military spending. Many of these same teams also included plan provisions dealing with arms control tactics. Assuming no dispute over the arms race occurred in affirmative constructives, the first introduction of this argument would be the second negative constructive. Assuming that the negative claimed that the spending provision accelerated the arms race, the affirmative rejoinder should address only that claim. This rule demands direct clash and disallows the application of the remotely related arguments to the issue.

The best test for this standard is the independence of the argument. A "true" turnaround cannot stand alone; it requires negative argumentation to stand. In the aforementioned illustration a claim that the treaty provisions of the plan reduce the arms race could stand on its own and would not be admissable if first argued in the first affirmative rebuttal. It is an advantage, independent of negative argumentation. In the same instance an argument that the plan actually decreased military spending would be admissible since it addresses the claim advanced by the negative team. Similarly, responses what provide reasons why the arms race was desireable would be admissible.

Third, rejoinder must be presented at the first opportunity in rebuttals. This

rule guarantees that the opposition will have an early opportunity to answer the other team's arguments. This allows both teams the maximum time to respond, encouraging full treatment of each issue. This rule is designed to maximize clash and encourage good argumentation. Dropped arguments should be ignored by the critic in making the final decision.

Finally, the judge must evaluate the quality of the arguments presented. Certainly a team could present reasons why the opposition's arguments were so poor that they should be discounted to a large extent. It is conceivable that a claim was so attenuated[19] or its relationship so poorly explained that it could be disregarded.

Standards for evaluating these arguments are supplied in a variety of prescriptive textbooks.[20] A description of such specific standards is beyond the purview of this essay. It should be noted that this standard is not intended to include the critic as a praticipant in the dispute. The critic should decide the debate based on the arguments advanced by the debaters, and should not introduce additional arguments into it. However, in order to decide which team carries an argument on a particular issue, the critic may have to evaluate the quality of the evidence introduced by the teams on that point, or the validity of the inferences drawn. Good teams will initiate this process in the debate, for instance, by contrasting the quality of their evidence with that of their opponents. However, the critic must complete the process, or initiate it if the debaters fail to do so.

Ethics

Two rules are developed in this area of decision making:

1. The A.F.A. Code recommendations governing ethical practices in debate should be adhered to.
2. The critic should punish ethical violations through both the decision and speaker points.

As critics in an educational activity, we cannot tolerate unethical conduct by debaters. The A.F.A. Code offers guidelines for these concerns and this document ought to function as our standard here. Critics should not hesitate to use penalties in speaker points and decision to punish such behavior. The magnitude of the punishment should be directly related to the gravity of the violation(s).

Summary

After a discussion of the use of decision making systems in academic debate, six criteria for evaluating such decision making systems were elaborated:

Fitness (for the academic debate context)

Fairness (to each team)

Clarity and Consistency

Facilitates the Decision Making Process

Encourages Quality Argumentation

Subject to Criticisms from Originating Context (if any).

Use of the evaluation criteria by advocates is illustrated. Then a new decision making system--the decision rules system--is developed within the framework of these criteria. The rules are grouped into four broad areas based on the type of decision the critic is required to make. These rules are summarized in Appendix I.

Appendix I

Determination of Jurisdiction

1. The plan must include an example of the resolution.
2. Topical portions of the plan must be necessary in order to accrue the alleged benefits.
3. The plan must be sufficient in order to accrue the alleged benefits.
4. If challenged, the affirmative must demonstrate that its plan satisfies these requirements.

Choosing Policy

1. Presumption rests with the negative and is a function of the risk of change.
2. Risk is directly related to the extent of change a policy undertakes, to the importance of the affected area, and to the difficulty of reversing the change; it is inversely related to the qualtity and quality of the information on which it is based.
3. The benefits of the affirmative policy must outweigh its costs, compared to the present system or alternative negative policy.
4. Costs and benefits are estimated by the product of the probability of the outcome and the utility of the event.
5. The speaker is responsible for the positions s/he advances.
6. Counterplans must be non-topical and competitive.
7. The policy with the least risk has presumption in a counterplan debate. If risk levels seem equivalent, the team with psychological presumption should be assigned logical presumption.
8. Plans must be presented in constructives; counterplans must be presented in first negative constructive.

Argumentation Evaluation

1. Contradictory positions are disallowed.
2. Rebuttals argument must rejoin antecedent arguments.
3. Rejoinder must be presented at the first opportunity in rebuttals.
4. Critics should evaluate the quality of the arguments presented.

Ethics

1. The A.F.A. Code recommendations governing ethical practices in debate should be adhered to.
2. The critic should punish ethical violations through both the decision and speaker points.

Notes

[1]J. Robert Cox, "A Study of Judging Philosophies of the Participants of the National Debate Tournament," Journal of the American Forensic Association 11(Fall 1974): 61-71.

[2]David Thomas, "Mail Survey of Judging Philosophy," N.D.T. Booklet of Judges, 1980.

[3]Kent C. Colbert, "A Survey of N.D.T. Participants, 1979-80," Unpublished manuscript.

[4]Walter Ulrich, N.D.T. Booklet of Judges, 1977.

[5]Austin J. Freeley, "Judging Paradigms: The Impact of the Critic on Argument," in Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation, eds. George Ziegelmueller and Jack Rhodes (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1981), p. 434.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Robert Rowland is working independently on this problem. He develops similar evaluation criteria in his "Standards for Paradigm Evaluation," Journal of the American Forensic Association (in press) and applies them in "Debate Paradigms: A Critical Evaluation," Dimensions of Argument, pp. 448-75. He stops short, however, of developing an alternative decision system.

[8]Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[9]Margaret Masterman, "The Nature of a Paradigm," in Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, eds. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 61-65.

[10]James J. Unger, N.D.T. Booklet of Judges, 1977.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Chester Gibson, N.D.T. Booklet of Judges, 1977.

[13]Michael Wavada has been extremely influential on our views of topicality and extra-topicality, and these decision rules had their genesis in his work. See, e.g., "Acceptance and Rejection of Extra-Topical Plan Planks," Central States Speech Association, St. Louis, 1979.

[14]Allan J. Lichtman and Daniel M. Rohrer, "The Logic of Policy Dispute," Journal of the American Forensic Association 16(Spring 1980) develop six factors; we use four of them, p. 244.

[15]See, e.g., J.P. Kahan, "How Psychologists Talk about Risk," Rand Doc. P6403 October 1979, or P.C. Gardiner and W. Edwards, "Public Values: Multiattribute Measurement for Social Decision Making," in M. Kaplan & S Schwartz, Eds., Human Judgment and Decision Processes (New York: Academic Press, 1975.

[16]David Zarefsky, "Policy Systems Debate: A Response to Lichtman and Rohrer," Speech Communication Association, San Antonio, 1979, p. 5.

[17]Vincent F. Follert, The Utility of Utility Theory," Journal of the American Forensic Association, in press.